(b) in what manner the machine would prevent frauds;

(c) whether Government also propose to introduce such machines in passport offices in other parts of the country; and

(d) the manner in which Government propose to utilize services of a large number of excess personnel?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) Passport writing machines have been introduced in the Regional Passport Office, Hyderabad on 9th November 2001.

(b) Since the image of the applicant and signatures will be printed by these machines directly on passport booklets, forgeries due to photo substitution will be eliminated.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) As there is a shortage of Group 'C' staff in the Central Passport Organisation, no exces personnel would be available due to the introduction of passport writing machines. However, this measure would enable the passport offices to re-deploy staff to reduce pendencies, expedite issue of passports and improve the overall quality of service to the applicants.

Accidents on National Highways in U.P.

†*253. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of accidents that took place on the National Highways in Uttar Pradesh during the last three years;

(b) the number of people killed/injured in such accidents in the State during the said period; and

(c) the steps taken to prevent road accidents on the National Highways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

KHANDURI): (a) and (b) As per information available the number of road accidents, persons killed and injured on National Highways in Uttar Pradesh during last three years are as under:

Year	Accidents	Persons Killed	Persons Injured
1998	5741	3318	4437
1999	6442	3700	4809
2000	6198	3418	4362

(c) Steps taken includes following:

i) Widening of single lane to 2-lanes

ii) Widening of selected 2-lane sections to 4-lane

iii) Improvement of road geometrics

iv) Construction of bypasses

v) Reconstruction to weak and narrow bridges and culverts

vi) Providing paved shoulders

vii) Strengthening weak pavements

viii) Junction improvements

ix) Replacement of level crossings by road over-bridges

x) Retropreflective road signs

xi) Thermoplastic road markings

xii) Provision of parking lay byes

xiii) Provision of Service Roads

xiv) Wayside amenities on high traffic density corridors, and

xv) Creation of awareness amongst various categories of Road Users, etc.